

## **Metropolitan Homelessness Encampment Task Force Meeting**

Tuesday, January 27, 2016

at Metro Social Services

800 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

**Present:** Will Connelly, Wendell Segroves, Phil Duke, Traci Pekovitch, Lindsey Krinks, Sgt. John Bourque, Tommy Linch, Erik Cole, Renee Pratt

**Public:** Robert Gelly, Howard Allen, Chris Scott, Samuel Lester, Robert Jenkins, Steve Lindstrom, Kate Wade, Lesley Head, Lauren Plummer, Tracy Harris, Haley Swagner, Kay Haley, Trip Hunt, Suzie Tolmie, Steve Ryder, Denis Huey, Elizabeth Langgle-Martin

**Staff:** Judy Tackett, Karri Simpson

### **Framework and Task at Hand:**

Judy Tackett, who will serve as the moderator for the duration of this task force, listed the taskforce members. Will Connelly will be the staff representative for the Metro Homelessness Commission and will participate in the discussion, but will not vote on any recommendations decisions regarding what will be presented to the Commission.

Judy Tackett went over the ground rules:

- Begin and end on time.
- Listen to each other and be open to others views and new ideas.
- Limit phone usage and if you must take a call, step outside.
- Please do not deliberate on what was discussed at this meeting with each other outside of this meeting. You can speak with people experiencing it, but conversation between task force members needs to be transparent and occur in the meeting.

There was an overview of the decision making process led by Judy Tackett. Task members were told that they need respect and recognize that everyone has an opinion and solution, but must also acknowledge that they may not agree 100% on the outcome. A vote will be taken on every recommendation so that Commissioners are informed on how this recommendation was arrived at, along with details on any dissenting voters. Each task group member gets one vote and if they are unable to attend a meeting, someone cannot fill in and vote for them.

Public input will be approached in a different manner at this meeting. Rather than an open forum, a specific question will be asked to the public to gauge their thoughts and weigh in on the conversation that task force members are having. Wendell Segroves and Judy Tackett will also stay for an extra 30 minutes to provide anyone with lived experience additional time to share their thoughts, which will be brought back to the task force.

Judy Tackett went on to discuss the difference between a recommendation and implementation plan. An implementation plan is a step by step action plan with a timeline, while a recommendation is to create that action. The group has until March 4<sup>th</sup> to present to the full Commission and needs to be clear of what the goals are.

The audience this task force is working to address is the full Commission. Commissioners want recommendations on “unauthorized and authorized encampments.” They want recommendations and a report back at the March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, giving the group until March 2<sup>nd</sup> to achieve this.

Success of this group is to come up with recommendations that lead to further steps in addressing the encampment issue. All agreed.

### **Review of previous input from the public:**

The document detailing public comment from the previous encampment meeting held in the fall was shared. This is a public document that anyone can request access to.

### **Input Session from Task Force members:**

The task force was asked to pair up and brainstorm what the questions are that need to be answered by this group and then share with the full task force what they thought the most important question was of those questions. Three groups were formed. Each produced the top question for them and presented them to the other task force members.

The three most important questions shared were:

- Is there a common thread that connects people who choose an encampment?
- Is it a human right to exist in public space without being criminalized when there is not enough shelter/housing? If so, how can we create safe zone where people can transition?
- Will sanctioned camps help end homelessness?

Conversation around these three questions ensued in regards to the philosophical compass answering the human rights question gives; the common thread that links people in camps is that the community isn’t offering housing people want- often it comes with high barriers and strings attached- or that they can’t afford, and that resources are limited so that ensuring the recommendations are with a focus on ending homelessness.

The decision was made to combine the questions regarding ending homelessness and common threads, which will be discussed at the next meeting.

### **Public Input Session:**

During the question discussion, the public was asked which question they found to be most important and why.

### **Homework to prepare for next meeting:**

USICH has come out with encampment policies. Task force members were asked to read these policies. Judith Tackett will send out the top question the group decided to focus on at the next meeting. Task force members are asked to be ready to start discussion around that question. She will capture all questions each brainstorming group has produced.

### **Next meeting:**

Wednesday, Feb. 3, 9-10:30 a.m., Metro Social Services, 800 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North.